

From: Cheri Sinnott [mailto:cheris@isrc.us]

Sent: Wednesday, November 20, 2013 11:45 AM

To: Ann Duffy

Subject: 1115 Waiver

Dear Health and Medicine Policy Research Group,

I have been a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in Illinois for 25 years. I am the Director of a Social Service Agency serving students in Illinois who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing, I am an adjunct faculty member at a community college, and I maintain a private practice. I am also a Board Member of the Illinois Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers.

I am requesting that you please consider the following:

Re: Behavioral Health Expansion and Integration (1B, p. 7)

Establish a rules process for PA 95-518, the social work Medicaid reimbursement law, which will enable behavioral health services to be more readily available on a community level. Public Act 95-518 authorizes (but does not mandate) reimbursement to LCSWs for Medicaid-eligible services in all settings, but to date the Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) has chosen not to implement the Act.

Re: Loan Repayment (section 4B)

Included Social Work on the list of health care professions eligible for the state loan repayment program. Alleviating some of the financial burden associated with obtaining a master's level social work degree (necessary for most positions in health care settings), will foster a stable and competent social work workforce. Loan repayment will also incentivize social workers to practice in medically underserved areas.

Re: Workforce Training (section 4C, p. 13)

Please include Social Work on the list of health care professions eligible to receive workforce training grants. With social work playing a critical role in the implementation of state Medicaid reform, we need to build and sustain our workforce capacity. Funding for training and continuing education, particularly in the areas of gerontology and chronic care management, will help us in this effort.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Cheri Sinnott, LCSW

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Cheri Sinnott, LCSW, Director

Illinois Service Resource Center

Serving Deaf/Hard of Hearing Student Behavioral Needs

A Technical Assistance Center of the Illinois State Board of Education

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